

Relaxation System

At right is the Environ behavior and stress management system, a “get-away-from-it-all” refuge from the pressures and tensions of modern fast-paced lifestyles whose users can simultaneously take accelerated learning courses in a variety of self-improvement subjects.

Marketed by Medical Behavioral Technology (MBT), Inc./Frank Italiane, Laguna Beach, California, the system is built around a “body lounge,” a kind of super easy chair that incorporates sensory devices. The computer controlled enclosure provides filtered, ionized air to create a feeling of invigoration, enhanced by mood-changing aromas. Environ’s occupant is surrounded by multi-dimensional audio and the lighting is programmed to change colors, patterns and intensity periodically. These and other “sensory stimulators” are designed to provide an environment in which, according to MBT, the learning process is accelerated because “research has proven that while an individual is in a deep state

of relaxation, the mind is more receptive to new information. When information is combined with programmed sensory stimulation, acquisition of new knowledge takes place at an accelerated rate and retention is increased.”

To activate the educational narrations, the user selects the desired program from a lengthy list and pushes a button. Examples of programs in the Environ catalog are Stress Management; Personal Motivation; Career Development; Sales Management; Physical Health and Longevity; Weight Reduction; Stop Smoking Now; and Foreign Languages.

The enclosure was designed for MBT by Powers Design Intra, Newport Beach, California and the design incorporates NASA anthropometric technology. Anthropometry is the study of the size, shape and motion characteristics of the human body; it is fundamental to successful design of clothing, equipment and workplaces in flight vehicles.

In planning for the Space Shuttle, Johnson Space Center (JSC) felt a need to expand the anthropometric data base. Accordingly, JSC undertook—with the assistance of Webb Associates, Yellow Springs, Ohio—to assemble the information available worldwide and produce a centralized collection of anthropometric knowledge. The result was a three-volume *Anthropometric Source Book*, a complete survey of data and a guide to its application; it has been



used in a number of spinoff applications involving design of workplaces and equipment of a non-aero-space nature. In addition to the NASA anthropometric data utilized in the design of the chamber itself and the body lounge, Environ also employs a NASA-designed pulse-monitoring electrode that is supplied by Heart Rate, Inc., Costa Mesa, California. ▲